

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0143

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AR, US

SUBJ: PRESS STORIES ON POSSIBLE KISSINGER VISIT AND HIS
COMMENTS AT SWEARING IN OF AMBASSADOR HILL

REF: BA USINFO 121 1/7/74

1. SUMMARY: LOCAL PRESS GAVE PROMINENT AND FAVORABLE COVERAGE TO SECRETARY'S COMMENTS, MADE AT AMBASSADOR HILL'S SWEARING-IN CEREMONY, ON THE IMPORTANCE OF ARGENTINA IN WORLD AFFAIRS. AP AND AFP STORIES THAT NEWSMEN OVERHEARD SECRETARY, AT HILL CEREMONY, TELL GOA AMBASSADOR ORFILA THAT HE WOULD VISIT BUENOS AIRES IN APRIL ALSO CARRIED. HERIBERTO KAHN OF LA OPINION, BY-LINED A FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN WHICH HE USED THE ABOVE INFORMATION PLUS APPARENT BACKGROUND BRIEFING BY LOCAL OFFICIALS TO PUT POSSIBLE TRIP BY SECRETARY INTO PERSPECTIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE LOCAL PRESS GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO FORMAL REMARKS MADE BY THE SECRETARY AT AMBASSADOR HILL'S SWEARING-IN CEREMONY. MOST STORIES STRESSED THE SECRETARY'S PHRASE, "...OUR RELATIONS HAVE HAD THEIR UPS AND DOWNS. BUT WE VERY WELL REALIZE THAT PERMANENT PROGRESS TOWARD A MORE PEACEFUL WORLD IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE CONTRIBUTION OF SO IMPORTANT A COUNTRY AS ARGENTINA."

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3. CLARIN CARRIED AP AND AFP STORIES SAYING THAT NEWSMEN

OVERHEARD THE SECRETARY TELL ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR ORFILA THAT HE WOULD BE VISITING BUENOS AIRES AFTER THE FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN MEXICO IN FEBRUARY. THE STORY ADDS THAT THE SECRETARY WILL ALSO VISIT BRAZIL, VENEZUELA, AND PERU IN ADDITION TO ARGENTINA. EARLY APRIL IS GIVEN AS THE DATE FOR THE SECRETARY'S TRIP. THE ARTICLE ENDED BY NOTING THAT EXPECTATIONS FOR BETTER US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS RESULTING FROM A KISSINGER TRIP ARE QUITE HIGH. THOUGH DISAPPOINTED BY THE ROCKEFELLER AND ROGERS TRIPS TO THE AREA, THE LATIN AMERICANS, BECAUSE OF KISSINGER'S PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIS PERSONAL QUALITIES, HOPE FOR CONCRETE RESULTS, IT SAID.

4. IN LA OPINION HERIBERTO KAHN QUOTED A "HIGH DIPLOMATIC SOURCE" AS SAYING, "IF KISSINGER MAKES A LATIN AMERICA TRIP, HE WILL VISIT BUENOS AIRES." (COMMENT: KAHN HAS GOOD FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES AND HAS FOLLOWED THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY VERY CLOSELY. THUS, QUOTE VERY*LIKEL* REFLECTS GOA VIEW OF IMPORTANCE IT EXPECTS US TO PLACE ON ARGENTINA IN CONTEXT OF A VISIT TO LATIN AMERICA BY THE SECRETARY). KAHN ALSO STATED, "IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, THAT KISSINGER WILL, WHILE IN BUENOS AIRES, HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT MEETING WITH JUAN PERON." KAHN AGAIN REPEATED THE NOW FAMILIAR THEME THAT ARGENTINA COULD BECOME A "COMPETENT INTERLOCUTOR" BETWEEN US AND LATIN AMERICA. HE ENDED BY NOTING THAT SOME GOA OFFICIALS WERE COMPARING THE KISSINGER REMARKS ON ARGENTINA TO THE FAMOUS 1971 NIXON STATEMENT, "AS BRAZIL GOES, SO GOES LATIN AMERICA."

5. COMMENT: KAHN PIECE, ESPECIALLY PART ABOUT IMPORTANCE US-PLACES ON ITS RELATIONS WITH GOA, PROBABLY IS OT ALL OF HIS OWN MANUFACTURE. CLEARLY HIS FOREIGN M*INISTRY AND OTHER CONTACTS MUST BE REINFORCING THIS VIEW WITH HIM. HE HAS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TOLD EMBOFFS THAT GOA HAS HIGHEST POSSIBLE REGARD FOR THE SECRETARY AND CLEARLY VALUES THE ATTENTION HE HAS GIVEN GOA. POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT GOA WILL OVERSELL BOTH PUBLIC OPINION AND ITSELF ON WHAT TO *XPECT FROM A VISIT BY SECRETARY. HOWEVER, IN IMAGE-CONSCIOUS ARGENTINA MERE FACT OF A VISIT BY SO HIGHLY ESTEEMED A PERSON AS THE SECRETARY WOULD BE TAKEN AS A REAL ACHIEVEMENT BY THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULACE AND BY GOA OFFICIALDOM, PARTICULARLY IF ARGENTINA

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IS FIRST COUNTRY VISITED ON TRIP.
KREBS

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